

**CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**February 25, 2003**  
**LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA**

---

The meeting of the California High-Speed Rail Authority was called to order on February 25 at 10:00 a.m. at the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Los Angeles.

Members Present:      Rod Diridon, Sr., Chairperson  
                             Fran Florez, Vice Chairperson  
                             Jerry Epstein, Vice Chairperson  
                             Dr. Ernest A. Bates  
                             William E. Leonard  
                             Joseph E. Petrillo  
                             Leland Wong

Members Absent:      Ben L. Hom  
                             T.J. Stapleton

**Approval of Minutes for January 25, 2003 Meeting**

Chairperson Diridon presented the minutes for approval. Vice Chairperson Epstein moved to approve the January 25, 2003 meeting minutes. Member Petrillo seconded the motion, which carried 7-0.

**Authority Members' Meetings for Compensation**

Chairperson Diridon presented the list of meetings for compensation for approval. Member Leonard moved to approve the list of meetings for compensation. Vice Chairperson Florez seconded the motion, which carried, 7-0.

**Members Reports**

Member Wong welcomed the Authority to the Los Angeles area. Chairperson Diridon commented on how busy the month has been for him and staff. He requested the Board Members to make known their availability for speaking engagements.

**Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director Mehdi Morshed reported the Federal Omnibus bill was recently signed by the President and includes \$1.25 million for the Authority's activities that go beyond those currently being funded by the State. Therefore, staff will work with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regarding acquisition requirements and the State Department of Finance to acquire a match of funds and authorization to spend the federal funds.

Executive Director Morshed provided an update on the proposed 2003-2004 budget. The Legislative Analyst Office (LAO) released the "Analysis of the 2003-04 Budget Bill". The LAO report recommends that the budget proposal to consolidate Authority into Caltrans be rejected and HSRA funding be restored and further recommends that Caltrans' budget be reduced by \$2,242,000. The Senate Transportation Committee held an oversight hearing at the beginning of February. Executive Director Morshed testified at the hearing. Various members of the committee, including the Chairman indicated an objection to the proposed consolidation. The Assembly Transportation Committee held a hearing on February 24<sup>th</sup>.

Executive Director Morshed testified at the hearing, and presented the Authority's project to the Committee. The Chairman of the Assembly Transportation Committee discussed the need for coordination and utilizing various expertises available to the Authority. Executive Director Morshed testified that has been the Authority's policy since it's beginning.

Executive Director Morshed presented a letter from the Attorney General's office regarding the proposal to replace Authority staff with Caltrans staff and possible trailer bill. He summarized the letter stating some key points are:

- If the transfer is to take place, the issuance and adoption of the EIR should be postponed.
- There lies the question of responsibility and the Authority cannot delegate the issuance of the EIR.
- May pose some issue of conflict if Caltrans is responsible for preparing the EIR, yet because of high-speed rail system's impact on state highways and right-of-ways, Caltrans has a commenting role.
- Impact on litigation.
- Who would legally represent the Authority?

The Board agreed to make the letter available to the public.

Executive Director Morshed reported the Authority's technical work is on schedule and therefore will meet the deadline of August 2003, notwithstanding budgetary issues that may come up.

### **Senate Bill 91**

Executive Director Morshed presented an analysis of SB91, author Senator Florez. The Authority is a single purpose entity with the purpose to plan, build and operate a high-speed rail system. SB91 proposes to merge intercity rail with the Authority. While this bill has some merit, it is wise to consider the potential distraction from building and operating the high-speed train system. There also exists the question of timing. Both activities seem to be currently running well. It must be considered if this proposed merge would accelerate or decelerate the Authority's activities. There are not a lot of details in SB91, therefore, Executive Director Morshed recommended the Authority take SB91 under advisement and continue to work with the author and the administration in coming up with a solution that best serves the State relative to both high-speed and conventional rail. Member Leonard concurred with the recommendation. Member Petrillo concurred with the recommendation. Chairperson Diridon also concurred with the recommendation.

### **Los Angeles-Orange County-San Diego (LOSSAN) Corridor Update**

Deputy Director Dan Leavitt introduced Steve Schibuola, Project Manager of IBI Group. Mr. Schibuola presented an update of the technical studies being done in the LOSSAN corridor. Chairperson Diridon requested Warren Weber of Caltrans, Division of Rail to present Caltrans' comments pertaining to the schedule outlined in presentation. Mr. Weber reported the schedule presented is compatible with Caltrans' schedule. A copy of this presentation is available upon request.

### **Public Comment**

#### **Roy Shahbazian**

Mr. Shahbazian expressed his concern that amidst all the political voices the Authority keeps passenger concerns in the forefront. The passenger is concerned with three things: convenience and access to service; flexibility of service; and travel time.

**Richard Stowe, Rail Transit Environmental Coalition**

Mr. Stowe shared his design suggestions for the south Orange County LOSSAN corridor improvements.

**Alameda Corridor Project**

John Doherty, Director of Construction and Engineering of the Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority presented what was accomplished on the Alameda Corridor project and how it was accomplished. A copy of this presentation is available upon request.

**Overview of Dutch High-Speed Rail System**

Sandy Stadtfeld and John Boss from Booz Allen Hamilton delivered a presentation that provided information on the development and implementation of the Dutch High-Speed rail system. A copy of this presentation is available upon request.

Member Leonard announced his resignation from the Board and stated that this meeting is the last meeting that he will attend as a Board Member of the Authority. He saluted Chairperson Diridon for the leadership he has provided the Authority. He thanked the Board Members, Executive Director Morshed and staff for their efforts. Chairperson thanked Member Leonard for the expert advice he has provided to the Authority. Member Epstein thanked Member Leonard for his extraordinary contributions. Executive Director thanked Member Leonard for his service and leadership, particularly his diplomatic ability to deal with problems as they arise.

**Public Comment****Roger Christensen, Train Riders Association (TRAC)**

Mr. Christensen expressed his support for revisiting the December 1996 study that included the Altamont Pass. He also expressed support for the Central Valley alignment including downtown Fresno and downtown Bakersfield.

**Michael E. Dickerson**

Mr. Dickerson requested that the Board Members ask the presenters more questions, especially in relation to the proposed California high-speed rail system.

**Richard Stowe, Rail Transit Environmental Coalition**

Mr. Stowe stated the benefits of an efficient rail freight system cannot be overstated. With the completion of the Alameda Corridor project, the BNSF Harbor Subdivision should be upgraded to a South Bay commuter rail line in conjunction with the high-speed rail line.

**Identification of Date and Location of Next Meeting**

The next Authority Board meeting is scheduled on March 25, 2003 in San Diego, CA.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.